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TAGS: [MOPS](#) [OSCE](#) [PBTS](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [RO](#) [AF](#)  
SUBJECT: OSCE BRUSSELS MINISTERIAL: U/S BURNS' MEETING WITH  
ROMANIAN FM UNGUREANU

Classified By: Charge' Kyle Scott for reasons 1.5 (D) and (E).

SUMMARY

1. (C) During a cordial meeting on the margins of the OSCE Ministerial, Romanian FM Mihai-Razvan Ungureanu and Under Secretary Burns affirmed the importance of increasing the

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pool of European countries contributing troops to NATO combat operations in Afghanistan. Romanian FM noted that at the NATO Riga summit, he had urged other major EU member states, including Germany, to answer the call for more troops. For its part, Bucharest was prepared to send an additional two battalions. U/S Burns reiterated strong U.S. support for Romania,s bid to host the 2008 NATO summit and advised Ungureanu on the elements of an effective lobbying strategy. Ungureanu also raised the President,s initiative on the U.S. Visa Waiver Program, an outstanding MOD request for technical details regarding U.S. basing arrangements, and the candidacy of the current Romanian OSCE Ambassador for the OSCE post of High Commissioner for National Minorities opening in summer 2007. U/S Burns obtained FM Ungureanu,s agreement to work closely with the U.S. on its proposal for an OSCE 2007 conference on anti-Semitism. U/S Burns offered to stay in close touch with Romania on Iraq policy following the December 6 release of the Baker-Hamilton Report. Finally, U/S Burns considered the possibility of visiting Bucharest in early 2007. END SUMMARY

AFGHANISTAN: EUROPEAN TROOP LEVELS

2. (C) In a friendly and candid thirty-minute meeting with the Romanian Foreign Minister Ungureanu on the margins of the OSCE Ministerial Conference in Brussels, Under Secretary Burns opened by expressing U.S. appreciation for the important contribution Romania was making to international efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan. Both sides reaffirmed the importance of increasing the number of European countries contributing troops to combat operations in Afghanistan. U/S Burns pointed out that it was unacceptable for only five or six NATO members to shoulder 98 percent of the troop casualties in the war effort. Both agreed that European NATO allies needed to step up and do more now. Ungureanu noted that at the November 28 Riga NATO summit, he had directly lobbied German FM Steinmeier and NATO Secretary-General De Hoop Scheffer on this point. For its part, Romania would be prepared to provide two additional battalions, one of which had been reserved for Kosovo contingency purposes. U/S Burns stressed the importance of higher troop levels in the three

key southern provinces of Helmand, Kandahar and Zabul to combat the Taliban.

#### NATO: 2008 SUMMIT BID

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13. (C) FM Ungureanu expressed disappointment at the outcome of the Riga summit on the question of Romania,s bid to host the 2008 NATO summit. It was "paradoxical" that Romania had received backing from France, but not from five of its usually reliable European supporters: UK, Italy, Spain, and Germany. He raised various factors that supported the case Romania,s bid, including the European political calendar (Portugal, as EU President in the second half of 2007 could be preoccupied with two planned EU summits), and the positive effect on PfP and MAP countries of seeing one of the newest NATO memberS host a NATO summit in 2008.

14. (C) U/S Burns reassured Ungureanu that the U.S. firmly supported Romania,s bid and expected that the competition between Portugal and Romania would be resolved through behind-the-scenes diplomacy rather than through an open vote. He counseled patience and an effective lobbying strategy including the need for Romania,s NATO Permrep to work with NATO Secgen de Hoop Scheffer. Portugal would likely need to receive some kind of Ungureanu consolation prize for losing the bid two times in a row. Ungureanu thanked U/S Burns for U.S. support and counsel, noted that he personally planned to tour European capitals on this issue.

#### VISA WAIVER PROGRAM

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15. (SBU) Ungureanu expressed gratitude for President Bush,s recent initiative on the Visa Waiver Program and special appreciation for Ambassador Taubman,s personal confirmation

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on December 1 that the President,s announcement constituted a political "commitment" and not merely a "declaration" of intent. While pointing out that Congress must approve any VWP expansion, U/S Burns assured Ungureanu that the U.S. was committed to working with Romania as part of the President,s major effort to accelerate U.S. Congressional approval of the Visa Waiver Programs for our Central European allies.

#### MILITARY BASING: REQUEST FOR TECHNICAL PROPOSAL

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16. (C/NF) Ungureanu conveyed a Romanian Ministry of Defense (MoD) request for the United States to provide a formal statement proposing the technical requirements for U.S. basing on Romanian territory. According to the MoD, such a proposal was necessary for the GOR to begin bilateral negotiations. U/S Burns said he would look into the matter.

#### OSCE MATTERS

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17. (C) Ungureanu briefly introduced his OSCE Ambassador Liviu Bota in order to notify U/S Burns of his intention to nominate him as Romania,s candidate to replace the outgoing OSCE High Commissioner for National Minorities. In response, U/S Burns praised Bota,s reputation and the GOR,s effort to put its best candidates forward for top multilateral positions. He promised to consult with Ambassador Finley on any previous U.S. commitments with respect to that particular OSCE post. Ungureanu said Romania intended to start campaigning for Bota,s candidacy early, but discreetly.

18. (C) Highlighting strong U.S. Congressional support, U/S Burns expressed U.S. interest in working closely with the Romania on its proposal to host a 2007 OSCE conference on

combating anti-Semitism. Ungureanu noted that the conference would be more complicated to arrange than that held a few years ago in Cordoba, Spain. In any case, Bucharest looked forward to consulting directly with the U.S. on its proposal for a conference on or about May 7.

#### IRAQ: NEXT STEPS

¶9. (C) Under Secretary Burns reviewed the December 2-3 timetable for the roll-out of the Baker-Hamilton Report on Iraq and offered to stay in touch with Ungureanu on possible next steps. The key question was how to deploy troops most effectively and support the development of the Iraqi Army. In recognition of Romania's importance as an ally and contributor in Iraq, we hoped to seek out Romania's ideas and counsel on these matters. Ungureanu welcomed the opportunity.

#### 2007 Visit

¶10. (U) U/S Burns expressed interest in accepting FM Ungureanu's invitation to visit to Bucharest, perhaps in early 2007.

¶11. (U) This message has been cleared by P.  
SCOTT